

SAINTS PETER & PAUL ORTHODOX CHURCH

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BULLETIN OF SEPTEMBER 02, 2018

SUNDAY/SEPTEMBER 2

14th Sunday After Pentecost

Prayers for Environment

9:10a.m. Hours; 9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy

Food Basket Sunday; Coffee Hour

FRIDAY/SEPTEMBER 7

7:00p.m. Vigil; Confession

SATURDAY/SEPTEMBER 8

Nativity of the Theotokos

(One of "the 12 Great Feasts")

9:10a.m. Hours; 9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy

5:30p.m. Vigil; Confessions

SUNDAY/SEPTEMBER 9

15th Sunday After Pentecost

Ss. Joachim & Anna

9:10a.m. Hours; 9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy

Coffee Hour; Church School

Don't say, "Bible-reading is for monks; am I turning my child into a monk?" No! It isn't necessary for him to be a monk. Make him into a Christian! Why are you afraid of something so good? It is necessary for everyone to know Scriptural teachings, and this is especially true for children. Even at their age they are exposed to all sorts of folly and bad examples from popular entertainments. Our children need remedies for all these things! We are so concerned with our children's schooling; if only we were equally zealous in bringing them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord! And then we wonder why we reap such bitter fruit when we have raised our children to be insolent, licentious, impious and vulgar. May this never happen; instead, let us heed the blessed Paul's admonition to bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. Let us give them a pattern to imitate; from their earliest years let us teach them to study the Bible.

—St. John Chrysostom

THE IMPORTANCE OF SPIRITUAL HELP FOR YOUNG CHILDREN

By Elder Paisios the Athonite

Parents have to help their children spiritually when they are little; because then, even their faults are little and they can easily be corrected. It's like a fresh potato; if you scratch it a little, it's peeled. If, however, it gets older and staler, you will need a sharp knife to clean it; and if it has some dark spots, you'll need to dig deeper. If the children are filled with Christ from an early age, they will always remain close to Him. And even if they should stray a little when they grow up, either because of a phase of rebellion they're going through or because of bad influences, they are sure to return to their senses. This is because the fear of God and the devotion that watered their hearts - when they were young - cannot ever be eradicated.



ON THE CORRECTION OF EVIL

By Elder Porphyrios

Our purpose is not to condemn evil, but to correct it. With condemnation people can get lost, with understanding and assistance they will be saved. Evil begins from bad thoughts. When you are bitter and indignant, even just with your thoughts, you spoil a spiritual atmosphere. You prevent the Holy Spirit from acting and allow the devil to increase the evil. You should always pray, love and forgive, driving out of yourself every evil thought.

Offerings Week of September 2

Relics Candle: for parishioners; in honor of St. John Maximovitch; in memory of Michael, Justina, Rosalia, Anastasia and Ivanna.

Olive Oil: in memory of Bocai and Sarchisian families; in memory of Julia; in memory of John and for the health of Vera; for the health of Zachary (Names Day); for the health of Proto-Deacon Paul and Diaconissa Patricia (wedding anniversary).

Wine: for forgiveness, salvation and illumination of Simona, (birthday); Gabriel, Tabitha, Kurt, Mariana and Stefan.

Flowers: For the health of Jerome & Pam; for the health of George & Lily

Synodicon: Memory Eternal!

Sept. 03, 1956 Maria Schander
Sept. 04, 2000 Marina Audrey Haitch
Sept. 05, 1917 Peter Darensky
Sept. 07, 1966 Fr. Stephen Adamcio
(rector 1953-1962)
Sept. 07, 1967 Anthony Cherniak
Sept. 07, 1970 George Rech
Sept. 08, 1925 Paul Petsur
Sept. 08, 1977 Mary Mahalick
Sept. 08, 1985 Adam Rezeszowski
Sept. 09, 1978 Xenia Seminuk

Coffee Hour Schedule

Sept. 02 Chirnoaga, Moldoveanu, Vajda
& Sue
Sept. 09 Peterson, Bakaletz, Mattei, Erkman
& Stone

Counters Schedule

Sept. 02 Rebecca O. & Ekaterina M.
Sept. 09 Ciprian C. & Jill P.

Ushers Schedule

Sept. 02 Timothy S. & Peter B.
Sept. 09 Jerome S. & Adrian M.

Readers Schedule

Sept. 02 John Z. / Sept. 09 Carmon P.

(Fourth Posting)

For Those who enter this Holy House with faith, reverence and the fear of God.....

- The pious are not late for the Divine Liturgy;
- The pious do not attend to their cell phones for calls, texting, but photo taking is okay;
- The pious understand that they don't come to church just for their children but understand that they, as adults need the Holy Liturgy and therefore arrive on time and desire to participate in the entire Divine Liturgy;
- The pious speak with God in church by prayer and speak with others in conversation after, but not at any time during the Divine Liturgy;
- The pious participate in the Liturgy by singing, praying, bowing their heads, kissing the holy icons, lighting candles, using Commemoration Books, crossing themselves, standing properly (Let us stand aright!) paying attention (Let us Attend!); they do not come to the Divine Liturgy as attendees but come as worshippers.
- The pious understand that candles are lighted before the Liturgy, not during the Liturgy;
- The pious do not go in and out during the Divine Liturgy by bad habit, but only if most necessary;
- The pious leave the church only after venerating the Holy Cross.
- Pious discipline and order needs to be taught, corrected if necessary and respected as righteous conduct.

Names Day Greetings

St. Edward/Sept. 03: Edward Sarchisian
St. Zachariah/Sept. 05: Zachary Sokol
Many Blessed Years!

The Calendar

Sept. 14/Fri. Elevation of Holy Cross
Oct. 01/Mon. Protection of Theotokos
Oct. 06/Sat. Abp. Michael at Vigil with us
Oct. 07/Sun. Abp. Michael's Visitation to our parish; festal meal to follow

What Is an Orthodox Life?

In our modern culture, we compartmentalize our lives: we consider our work lives and personal lives, family time and “me” time as distinct from one another. Some of us set aside Sunday mornings for our religious time. Some of us may even take the time on Saturday nights for Vespers or try to observe Great Lent. We believe that if each of these separate aspects of our lives can be healthy and fulfilling, we will have lived a good life.

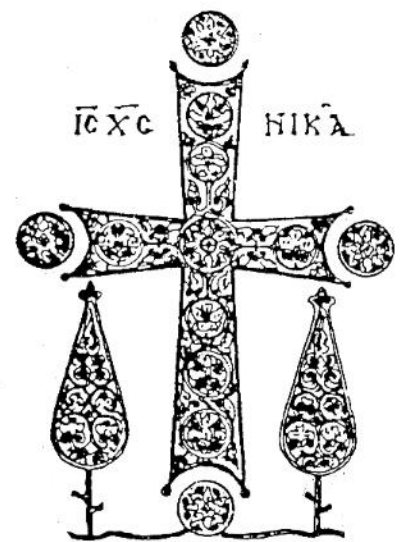
Yet Jesus clearly calls us to love Him with all our heart, all our soul, and all our mind. There is no compartmentalization in this, but true unity. Every aspect of ourselves and our lives should be united in our love for the Lord. Instead of seeing ourselves as a fragmented collection of various identities, Christ is calling us to a unified understanding of ourselves and our lives. Love for God must become the foundation of everything, and all aspects of our lives—our jobs and our families and our recreation, our meals and our entertainment—must all be connected to and part of a unified whole. We must build up our lives and our hearts and raise our families on the foundation of our faith.

Orthodoxy offers a means of bringing each element of our lives into our relationship with God. We baptize our children and bless our homes; we sanctify our diets with fasting and feed our minds with Scripture and the teachings of the Fathers. In the Church, we find the means to incorporate every aspect of ourselves into one good life. The word *wholesome* literally indicates a healthy wholeness, a unity that is good for us. Children benefit from the wholesomeness of a family life dedicated to the love of God.

What saves and makes for good children is the life of the parents in the home. The parents need to devote themselves to the love of God. They need to become saints in their relations to their children through their mildness, patience, and love. They need to make a new start every day, with a fresh outlook, renewed enthusiasm and love for their children. And the joy that will come to them, the holiness that will visit them, will shower grace on their children. —St. Porphyrios³

Parents must become saints, and grace will be showered on their children! That’s not an easy road, and it’s difficult to achieve in the climate of our modern culture.

None of this is to suggest that the domestic church is a necessarily peaceful and magical place; becoming the domestic church is no supernatural formula, and its prayers are not magical incantations that will produce harmony and joy. Family life is a struggle, no matter what; but when we struggle with Christ, we reap rewards. The work of shepherding a family is relentless and tiresome, but when we understand ourselves as the little church,



*Blueprints for the Little Church:
Creating an Orthodox Home*
By Elissa Bjeletich &
Clab Shoemaker © 2016
Ancient Faith Publishing

we begin to see blessings even in the struggles. This is no magic potion to make life easy, but simply another of the ways in which patience and work reap benefits later.

The American way of thinking and making decisions is growing ever more secular, moving away from a traditional religious perspective. Recently, the Pew Research Center released information regarding the status of Christianity and religion in the United States, and among those traditions studied, Orthodox Christians have one of the lowest rates of retention across Christian and non-Christian denominations. Only 53% of adults who were raised in the Orthodox Church still identify themselves as Orthodox Christians, which means that roughly half of all children raised in Orthodox households have left the Church.⁴ Many factors play into this statistic, but it should be eye-opening to Orthodox Christian parents who are working to build their little church. We need to think about how we are raising our children and whether we are truly planting the faith in their hearts.

These statistics could be discouraging to both family and parish, or they can be seen as a wake-up call, an incredible opportunity for growth and real commitment to the faith. In light of these revealing statistics, Barna Group—along with other independent and denominational think tanks—have pinpointed key factors in those children who retain the faith in which they were raised:

- » Mentoring relationships with non-parent adults
- » Teaching cultural discernment
- » Involvement of young people within the church
- » Vocational discipleship
- » A personal encounter with Jesus

Of the five things listed by Barna, four are completely within the grasp of parents. How empowering! Parents provide many of the elements that nurture authentic, lasting membership in the Church. Indeed, the reality is that young people are fleeing the faith of their families, but not those whose families have instilled a deep faith within their hearts; and the little church is one of the defining reasons children stay in the Church as they grow up.

Review that list from Barna again: What are the elements that enable children to develop a vibrant faith? How many of them are native to Orthodox Christian spirituality? Godparents are meant to provide a meaningful relationship with non-parent adults. Boys and girls can serve in various ways in the parish, from altar servers to planning events and working to maintain the beauty of the parish. The Church addresses every cultural question a person may have—not just ethnic culture, but questions of morality and holiness. Vocational discipleship can be fostered through a rela-



tionship with a caring father confessor, Sunday school teacher, or monastic father or mother. Our Divine Liturgy is designed around a personal and corporate encounter with God as we serve before Him and partake of the Sacraments.

The only one of the five items identified by Barna over which a parent has no control is the last. We cannot provide a meaningful experience with God for our children. We can prepare the ground, present them with opportunities, share our own experiences, but we cannot encounter Christ for them—they must do that for themselves. We can lead them to water, and we can tell them what it means to thirst and talk about how satisfying the water has been in our own lives, but they must decide to drink.



Holy Scripture says of the midwives who kept alive the Israelites' male children, that through the God-fearing midwives they made themselves houses. Does it mean they made visible houses? How can they say they acquired houses through the fear of God when we do the opposite, and learn in time, through fear of God to give up the houses we have? Evidently this does not refer to visible houses but to the houses of the soul which each one builds for himself by keeping God's commandments. Through this Holy Scripture teaches us that the fear of God prepares the soul to keep the commandments, and through the commandments the house of the soul is built up. Let us take hold of them, brothers, and let us fear God, and we shall build houses for ourselves where we shall find shelter in winter weather, in the season of storm-cloud, lightning, and rain; for not to have a home in winter-time is a great hardship. —St. Dorotheos of Gaza

The Orthodox life is not complicated. It is beautiful in its simplicity, wondrous in its depth, vivifying in its ritual and sacraments. The complications are typically self-imposed when, instead of following the Church's teachings or the admonitions of our priests and confessors, we try to cobble together a hodge-podge religion based mostly on external trappings and false deadlines.

It is in this milieu that the Pew research becomes the most startling and the Barna findings become most empowering. You don't have to do this alone! You aren't responsible for finding the correct path in the dark. As you build your little church and your family grows in grace, you will find that the path is clearly marked, and you are free to walk it at your own pace. Trust is key to this lifestyle. Trust your priest; trust the Church's Tradition; trust yourself, remembering these words of sacred Scripture:

I thank God, whom I serve with a pure conscience, as *my* forefathers *did*, as without ceasing I remember you in my prayers night and day, greatly desiring to see you, being mindful of your tears, that I may be filled with joy, when I call to remembrance the genuine faith that is in you, which dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice, and I am persuaded is in you also. (2 Tim. 1:3–5)



Liturgical Commands as defined by St. Nicholas Cabasilas (+14th c.)

“Let us Attend” - here we are admonished to cast away negligence and inattention, and to listen carefully to what is being said and done in the service.

“Wisdom” - wisdom is the summary of those thoughts which are in accord with the ceremony, which should occupy those full of faith when they behold (see) and listen (hear) to the ceremonies and prayers, so they are not concerned with no purely human sentiment.

“Let us stand aright” - by this exhortation we are warned to be ready for battle when we hold converse with God and assist at the holy mysteries. There must be no inattention; we must act with fervor and all reverence and in this manner look, listen, and pray throughout the service. The first sign of this fervor and devotion is the uprightness of our bodies; we do these things standing on our feet, not sitting down.

Why are these commands necessary? - It is because forgetfulness is a great tyrant; no human frailty defeats men so often and so easily. Now, it is necessary that our minds and hearts be in accord with the mysteries when we assist at the sacred prayers and ceremonies of the liturgy, unless we wish to attend in vain, and spend our time to no purpose. But this is far from easy to achieve. That is why, on the one hand, we should keep constant watch on ourselves, and behave with circumspection; and on the other, it is necessary that we should have some external reminder, so that we can collect our thoughts and not be distracted by day dreaming and vain thoughts.

THE THREE SOURCES OF OUR THOUGHTS

By St. John Cassian (+430)

We should know that the three sources of our thoughts are: from God, from the devil and from ourselves.

They are **from God** when He wills to visit us by the illumination of the Holy Spirit, which raises us up to a higher level of progress in the spiritual life; and when we have made little gain or have acted lazily and been overcome and He chastens us with a most heart-felt compunction, and when He opens to us the heavenly sacraments and changes our direction to better acts and to a better will.

And **from the devil**, a whole series of thoughts is born, when he attempts to subvert us by taking delight in evil and hidden things, fraudulently passing off wicked things as if they were good with the most subtle finesse and transforming himself for us into an angel of light.

Thoughts come **from us**, when we spontaneously remember things that we are doing or have heard.